United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Parkway Garden Homes

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 6330-6546 South Martin Luther King Drive | N/A | not for publication

city or town Chicago | N/A | vicinity

state Illinois code IL county Cook County code 031 zip code 60637

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide __local

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Parkway Garden Homes
Name of Property

Cook County, IL
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

X	private
	public - Local
	public - State
	public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

	building(s)
X	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
35	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
35	1	**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT/Moderne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: BRICK
roof: OTHER/Tar and Gravel
other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Parkway Garden Homes district, located in the Greater Grand Crossing community of Chicago, is a large-scale multi-family residential development designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor and completed in 1955. The district consists of thirty-five historic rectangular masonry buildings—eleven eight-story "elevator" buildings and twenty-four three-story "walk-up" buildings—and one non-contributing brick office building. The historic residential buildings are minimally decorated with early modernist features, including offset canted window bays, projecting cantilevered balconies at the open stairwells, corner ribbon windows, and streamlined concrete entrance canopies. All of the buildings are regularly fenestrated with rectangular window openings framed in concrete, which currently house groupings of non-historic aluminum windows. On the interior, both buildings house two- and three bedroom apartments with painted concrete block and gypsum panel walls and beamed ceilings.

Narrative Description

Setting and Site

The Greater Grand Crossing community, located approximately eight miles south of the Chicago Loop, was initially subdivided for residential development by real-estate developer Paul Cornell in the 1860 and 1870s. Early residents were Irish, English, and Scottish, with a large German settlement following in the 1890s. During the 1950s, the community transitioned from 6% African American to 86% African American. The White City Amusement Park, a massive entertainment venue built in 1904 between the railroad and South Park Drive (now Martin Luther King Drive) south of 63rd Street and north of 66th Street, was demolished to make way for Parkway Garden Homes. West of the complex is a large railroad yard that stretches all the way to the Dan Ryan Expressway. North, south, and east of the complex, development is primarily residential, with some scattered small-scale commercial properties lining Martin Luther King Drive and East 63rd Street.

In general, the landscaping within the Parkway Garden Homes district is simple and functional. The symmetrical arrangement of buildings on the fifteen-acre site creates primary and secondary areas of outdoor space within the complex. The primary elevations of buildings generally front inward towards informal courtyards or transitional spaces with open lawns framed by curved intersecting pedestrian pathways that connect to various areas throughout the complex. The two largest of these primary courtyards also house large concrete planters at their centers, with smaller concrete planters at their western corners. Secondary elevations generally front onto courtyards that house paved parking lots. The four triangular parking lots and courtyards along the east side of the complex also feature raised platforms that are currently vacant but once served as playgrounds. Original concrete steps and concrete ramps, which appear to be later additions, provide access to the raised playground areas. Concrete sidewalks running between buildings connect the courtyards. Along the eastern edge of the district, a paved service road runs parallel to Martin Luther King Drive, connecting the three vehicular entrances at 64th Street, 65th Street, and 66th Street. Only the 65th Street entrance is currently open to Martin Luther King Drive. Narrow access roads lead from the parking lots to the east service road and to Calumet Avenue on the west end of the district. A decorative metal fence runs around the perimeter of the district that appears to be a later addition. Plantings throughout are limited to scattered mature shade trees, lawn and groupings of shrubs against buildings.

Building Descriptions

The buildings in the Parkway Garden Homes district fall into one of two building types—three-story walk-up buildings and eight-story midrise buildings. The walkup buildings are groupings of vertically stacked units serviced by a front and rear stair. The eight-story midrise buildings are serviced by elevators and feature a single main entrance leading to a small center elevator lobby.

Both the walkup and midrise buildings within the district feature a unique type of reinforced brick construction pioneered by Holsman during the 1940s and 1950s. Exterior walls are brick reinforced with cores of poured cement grout and

vertical steel rods. Floors are pre-cast concrete slabs on concrete-filled steel channel joists. The building footprints are rectangular. Roofs are shallow side gables on the three-story walkup buildings and flat on the eight-story elevator buildings, and are covered with bitumen roofing material. Single brick mechanical penthouses near the center of each eight-story building mark the location of the elevator.

All of the buildings in the district are minimally decorated with early modernist features, including offset canted window bays, projecting cantilevered landings at the open rear stairwells, corner ribbon windows, and streamlined entrance canopies. All of the buildings are regularly fenestrated with rectangular window openings with concrete frames, which currently house groupings of non-historic aluminum slider windows. Window surrounds, entrance surrounds and canopies, projecting landing walls at the rear stairs of the three-story walkup buildings, and basement-level window wells and stairwells on the midrise buildings are all cast concrete elements with distinctive exposed aggregate. Decorative pre-cast concrete panels depicting signs of the zodiac mark the upper floors above the primary entrances on the walkup buildings.

Walkup Buildings

The three-story walkup buildings are composed of groupings of two to three residential blocks, each containing an enclosed front concrete stair and open rear concrete and metal stair flanked on each side by one apartment unit at each level. There are twenty-four three-story walkup buildings in the district—fifteen with two entrances and four units per floor (labeled A-B-A-B on the enclosed site map) and nine with three entrances and six units per floor (B-A-B-A-B-A and A-B-A-B-A-B). The smaller walkup buildings are located along the perimeter of the district. The larger walkup buildings are located within the interior of the district and are angled to form the triangular courtyards.

The primary facades of the three-story walkup buildings are broken up by canted window bays that flank the entrance bays. An angled concrete entrance surround with curved concrete canopy and decorative concrete panels above marks each front entrance. The entrance surround incorporates a large rectangular sidelight looking into the interior entry vestibule. Although some of the entrances retain the original corrugated, frosted glass within these sidelight openings, the majority house replacement clear glass panes. The primary entry doors on the walkup buildings are metal doors with a single offset rectangular light. The walkup buildings located on the interior of the district feature entries at grade level; walkups located along the east side of the district facing Martin Luther King Drive are a mixture of at grade entrances and slightly raised entrances accessed by a short concrete stair with metal pipe railing.

The rear stairs feature projecting concrete landing walls at the second and third floor landings. At the rear of the three-story walkup buildings, secondary entrances to each unit open onto the exterior stairs. Concrete steps at the base of each stair lead to below-grade basement entrances. Rear entry doors are non-historic metal doors in fair to good condition.

The short side elevations of the midrise buildings feature corner window at each end and a center window bay with small, single rectangular window openings.

Midrise Buildings
The eight-story elevator buildings feature four apartments per floor (labeled A-B-C-D on enclosed site plan) arranged around a central circulation corridor with one passenger elevator, and two full-height enclosed stairwells. On the long front and rear elevations, a center bay houses two square window openings at each story and is flanked by two canted window bays with rectangular openings of four ribbon windows. The end bays on these elevations feature a single window opening and corner window at each story. The shorter side elevations feature corner windows at each end and a center bay of paired windows separated by a wide concrete panel.

The front entrances of the midrise buildings are framed by a cantilevered rounded canopy with square ‘skylight’ openings along its narrow end; the canopy is supported by a concrete paneled wall that projects at an angle from the building. The entrances themselves are single metal doors with small rectangular lights. Secondary entrances on the midrise buildings are limited to below-grade basement entrances on rear elevations, accessed by concrete stairs.

Apartments in both building types are two- and three-bedroom units with painted gypsum panel walls and painted beamed ceilings formed by the projecting steel channel joists that support the concrete flooring system.

Integrity

Overall, the district retains a high degree of interior and exterior integrity, with no major non-historic additions or non-reversible alterations. The original layout of the landscaping within the district is intact but the landscaping itself is in fair to poor condition. The paved access roads, parking lots, and concrete curbs have been damaged by constant vehicular traffic. The east service road is in particularly poor condition, with dozens of large potholes and numerous areas of severely cracked and broken asphalt. A large number of the original concrete sidewalks are cracked and heaving, and many areas have been replaced with new concrete. The four raised playground areas and existing concrete planters are in fair condition but do not currently have play equipment installed.

The buildings themselves are well-preserved, with no major alterations. The original windows throughout the district have been replaced with non-historic aluminum windows within the original openings. Portions of the brick exterior on many of the building have been insensitively re-pointed. On the interior, all of the flooring, the kitchens, and many of the baths have been updated.

The cumulative effect of these minor alterations does not impact the overall architectural integrity of the building and its ability to convey its original function as post-World War II garden apartment district.

Parkway Garden Homes
Name of Property

Cook County, IL
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [X] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [X] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1950-1961

Significant Dates

1950-1955

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor

Period of Significance (justification)

Construction began on the Parkway Garden Homes complex in 1950 and continued through 1955. Since its completion, the complex has continuously operated as a residential development. Thus, the period of significance for the district begins in 1950, the date when work commenced on the property, and ends in 1961, the fifty-year cut-off for period of significance.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Parkway Garden Homes, constructed between 1950 and 1955, is significant under National Register Criterion A for community planning and development as one of the country's largest privately-financed residential developments designed for and spearheaded by African Americans during the post-World War II period. The complex—comprised of 694 cooperatively-owned apartment homes in thirty-five masonry buildings with landscaped grounds, parking, and plays areas—was initiated in 1945 by officers of the Dining Car Workers Union as a solution to the substandard housing available to their members and was developed by the Community Development Trust. The completed project was lauded by civil rights and housing advocates alike as a model for future urban affordable housing developments.

The Parkway Garden Homes is also locally significant under Criterion C for architecture as one of the most important developments designed by pioneering Chicago architect and planner Henry K. Holsman (1866-1963). Holsman, who designed a series of affordable co-operative apartment complexes in Chicago under the auspices of the Community Development Trust between the 1920s and the 1950s, was a nationally-recognized leader in affordable housing. His mutual-ownership model of residential development provided much needed housing throughout the city and allowed lower-income residents to have an ownership stake in their communities. Holsman's design for the Parkway Garden Homes, his last large housing project and the culmination of his work during the first half of the twentieth century, combined elements of the low-rise walk-up affordable housing developments of the 1930s and 1940s with the high-rise elevator buildings that would dominate the urban landscape in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The design of the buildings themselves, with their simple modernist forms and detailing, reflects the influence of modern apartment housing that was constructed throughout Europe between World War I and World War II.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

AFRICAN AMERICAN HOUSING IN CHICAGO 1920-1950

Before World War I, Chicago's black community accounted for only about two percent of the city's total population, and the city's major industries generally excluded African American workers from all but the lowest positions. However, when American entry into the war halted European immigration while simultaneously stimulating orders for manufactured goods, factories across the North fully opened their doors to black workers for the first time. News of higher wages and the promise of freedom from legally sanctioned racial discrimination (if not total equality) brought a flood of black Southerners to Northern cities. The Chicago *Daily Defender* newspaper, which was distributed throughout the nation and boasted a circulation of 130,000 comprised primarily of Southern subscribers, encouraged its readers to join "the exodus" to Chicago. Between 1916 and 1970, the Great Migration saw the relocation of hundreds of thousands of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North.

In Chicago, newly arriving blacks searching for housing found that they were confined to a strictly segregated area on the south side of the city known as the Black Belt, which by 1930 extended roughly from 22nd Street on the north to 63rd Street on the south, between Wentworth and Cottage Grove Avenues. A general shortage of housing in Chicago during the first half of the twentieth century made finding a home difficult for all Chicagoans, and the situation was exacerbated for black families moving into the overcrowded and overpriced Black Belt, even during the building boom of the 1920s. Chicago housing advocate and social organizer Elizabeth Hughes, who published a series of reports on housing conditions in the city during the 1910s and 1920s, wrote in 1925 that the surge of construction during the 1920s "had done nothing for the small-wage earner and his family," and had in large part bypassed the Black Belt.

Black migration from the south ebbed during the Great Depression of the 1930s but accelerated rapidly in the 1940s with the expansion of industry during World War II. The invention of the mechanical cotton picker toward the end of the 1940s, which essentially ended the sharecropping system under which many black families had labored in the South after the Civil War, extended northern migration well past the end of the war in 1945. By 1966, nearly ten times as many blacks

lived in Chicago as in 1920, rising from less than 4% of the city's total population to approximately 30%. The influx of new residents pushed the already overcrowded and dilapidated tenements and kitchenette apartments in the Black Belt to the breaking point, and left many families with substandard homes or no homes at all. One anonymous reader complained to the *Chicago Defender* in 1942, "I have walked the South Side Streets (Thirty-first to Sixty-ninth) from State to Cottage Grove in the last 35 days searching for a flat."

Few and far between, large subsidized housing projects constructed during the 1930s and 1940s provided some of the best affordable housing for Chicago's black community. In 1929, philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, who controlled Sears, Roebuck and Company, built the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments to house black families. Rosenwald's development was inspired by municipal housing projects constructed in post-war Europe and was based on the Dunbar Apartments, a housing development for black families built by John D. Rockefeller Jr. in 1926 in New York City's Harlem. The Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartment complex consisted of a series of five-story masonry apartment buildings enclosing a large landscaped interior courtyard. With 421 apartments and 16 storefronts facing the major commercial corridor of 47th Street, the complex served as the first large-scale affordable housing project for Chicago's African American community. Rosenwald invested $2.7 million in the project, but the complex failed as a business venture, returning only 2.4% during the first seven years.

The Chicago Housing Authority, created in 1937, constructed two large public housing complexes for African Americans during the 1940s that combined created over 3,000 new units of sound, affordable housing. The Ida B. Wells Homes at 39th Street and South Parkway Avenue (now Martin Luther King Boulevard) was the largest of the first four low-rise public housing complexes built by the CHA and was the only CHA development open to black families. When the complex opened in 1941, over 18,000 families applied to live in one of the 1,600 two- and three- bedroom apartments. According to J. S. Fuerst and D. Bradford Hunt in *When Public Housing Was Paradise: Building Community in Chicago*, the Ida B. Wells Homes was "one of the addresses most sought after by African Americans in the city." Families who made the cut celebrated the move from "hovel to haven."

During American involvement in World War II, the CHA was redirected to provide housing for workers in industries that supported the war effort. Altgeld Gardens, a 190-acre complex of two-story row houses in the far south neighborhood of Riverdale, was constructed to house black war laborers. Altgeld, with its 1,498 units, was patterned closely after Ida B. Wells and the other early CHA projects and later transitioned to a public housing project.

Restrictive covenants that prohibited the sale or rent of property to African Americans— which had been used in Chicago to maintain the strict segregation of its residential neighborhoods—were declared unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court in 1948. However, through the 1950s, attempts by black families to move into white neighborhoods were often met with vehement and violent reactions. The pressure to maintain the status quo in housing extended to the city's attempts to create new public housing complexes. When Elizabeth Wood, executive director of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA), proposed locating public housing sites in less congested areas outside of the Black Belt and the West Side ghetto in 1946, white residents reacted with "intense and sustained violence." City politicians forced the CHA to build its massive post-war public housing complexes in Chicago's poorest and most derelict neighborhoods. Private developers, including Henry K. Holsman's Community Development Trust, working in the post-war period to build affordable housing targeted to African Americans followed suit.

HENRY K. HOLSMAN AND MUTUAL-OWNERSHIP HOUSING IN CHICAGO

The driving force behind many of the most revolutionary affordable housing developments built in Chicago in the years following World War II, including the Parkway Garden Homes, was architect and urban planner Henry Kerchner Holsman (1866-1963). Born in Dale, Iowa in 1866 and orphaned at age eleven, Holsman supported his siblings while finishing high school and worked as a teacher for three years before enrolling in Grinnell College in 1887. Holsman, who had taken on remodeling jobs in his hometown to make extra money, studied architecture within the context of Grinnell's emphasis on social responsibility and ethical consciousness. After graduating in 1891, Holsman moved to Chicago, where he met and married artist Elizabeth Tuttle in 1896. He established his own architecture practice in 1900 and designed several academic facilities on college campuses throughout the Midwest. After a brief but very successful stint as an automobile designer—the Holsman Automobile Company produced one of the country's first mass-produced motor vehicles, the Holsman High Wheeler, between 1902 and 1910—Holsman turned his attention to the design, planning, and financing of affordable apartment buildings.

In *Leadership By Design: Creating an Architecture of Trust*, architect and U.S. Ambassador Richard N. Swett argues that Holsman led the call among architects to find creative solutions to the post-war housing shortage, particularly in urban areas. "Few developers were yet inclined to build decent, affordable housing for the lower middle and working classes, much less for the urban poor." But, in his 1919 inaugural address as president of the Illinois chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Holsman implored his fellow designers to view architecture as "a social phenomenon, not an individual phenomenon." This ideal led him to develop a financial model that would free new housing developments from the shackles of the real estate market, which made them unaffordable for the average family. As Swett describes:

> [Holsman] came up with a new business model called *mutual ownership*, which made apartment dwellers the beneficiaries of a mutual trust corporation that owned the building in which they lived. For a modest investment, owners purchased certificates in the trust and received a renewable, low-cost lease on an apartment. As their families grew, the trust members could trade up to larger apartments and sell their shares at market value. The new owners would assume occupancy and leasehold of the apartment…Since the price of shares [was] not tied to that of the property, and their resale value strictly controlled, limited-equity-co-operatives preserved long-term affordability.

The idea of co-operatively-owned apartments was not a new one. The first formal cooperatives were created in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century. The first housing cooperative in the United States was founded in 1876 in New York, but the idea was not well-established until after World War I. American housing cooperatives established during the 1920s tended to take one of two forms: exclusive apartment cooperatives for wealthy urban families and cooperatives organized by unions and certain immigrant groups to provide affordable housing to their members during the post-World War I housing shortage. By the mid-1920s, there were over a dozen such housing cooperatives operating in cities across the United States, including New York, Chicago, Detroit, Buffalo, San Francisco, and Philadelphia.

Unlike most co-operative apartment plans, which left the full financial responsibility of the building in the tenants' hands after construction was completed, Holsman's trusteeship system assigned primary fiscal responsibility for the building to a board of trustees that included the project developer. Tenants under the mutual ownership plan received all the advantages of a co-operative—reduced rents and tax benefits—but their financial liability was limited to their original equity investment. This system helped to make Holsman's cooperative housing a feasible option for middle-class families and ensured that the projects were financially sound investments.

In 1922, Holsman formalized his mutual ownership concept by creating the Community Development Trust (CDT). Holsman acted as both executive trustee and architect for projects initiated by the CDT, thus maximizing efficiencies in the cost of materials and design of the actual buildings. This, coupled with the non-speculative nature of the CDT, allowed the Trust to charge monthly rents well below market rates and gave residents a potential return on their investment. Construction on the CDT's first project, a sixteen-unit apartment building in Hyde Park, began in 1923. By the beginning of the Great Depression, Holsman had designed and completed six more apartment buildings in Hyde Park for moderate income families utilizing the mutual ownership model, ranging in size from sixteen to sixty units.

During the 1930s, Holsman became increasingly involved in the problem of housing in blighted urban areas. In 1931-32, he chaired a committee on blighted area housing for the Architect's Club of Chicago and called for "the organization of a group of responsible business, professional, and civic minded citizens to begin assembling funds and properties to start the actual building of low cost housing in blighted areas." He promoted his mutual ownership concept as the large-scale solution to the decaying urban core, stressing that "no vast schemes of public works for the employment of surplus artisans and labor can surpass the beneficence to be derived from rehabilitating our blighted areas with decent homes for families of low income."

In October of 1933, the *New York Times* profiled Holsman's efforts in Chicago and the problems facing the average wage earner who could not afford decent housing in the city, but the 1930s saw little in the way of actual progress for the architect's plans for large-scale affordable housing. Holsman's twin sons, John and William, both graduates of Cornell University's School of Architecture, joined the firm in the early 1930s, and the firm of Holsman & Holsman struggled through the Great Depression by concentrating on the development of new construction methods for prefabricated housing and affordable single-family homes. By the late 1930s, Henry Holsman had again picked up the mantle of affordable housing by serving as the chair of a consortium of architects that acted as consultants to the newly formed Chicago Housing Authority.

While working with the CHA on the development of the Julia C. Lathrop Homes, Jane Addams Houses, Trumball Park Homes, and Ida B. Well Homes, Holsman also began plans for his own large-scale projects, utilizing federal funding available through the Federal Housing Administration. In November 1939, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported that ground had broken on the River Forest Garden Apartments, a group of eight four-story brick apartment buildings designed by Holsman & Holsman that was funded in part by a $545,000 FHA-insured mortgage. The completed project contained a total of 128 apartments, Holsman's largest project to date. It would quickly be eclipsed by an even more ambitious project, the Princeton Park Homes.

Since the late 1930s, the Illinois state director of the Federal Housing Administration, Gael Sullivan, had stressed the need for privately financed housing for black families in Chicago. By 1942, as thousands of skilled black workers streamed into the city to take manufacturing jobs associated with the war effort, the need for new housing was even more urgent. Sullivan sought out Holsman, who partnered with developer Donald O'Toole to form the Princeton Park Trust. Holsman & Holsman designed a series of 908 two-story masonry row houses laid over 80 acres of winding suburban-style roads on the south side of Chicago. The project, constructed at a cost of over $4.5 million (and partially financed through a multi-million dollar FHA-insured mortgage), was the first privately-developed large-scale rental housing complex for African Americans in Chicago, and was one of the largest in the country at the time of its construction. The first phase of the project was completed in 1944 and all of the units were leased to black war workers and their families. The development was within easy commuting distance of the south Chicago plants of Carnegie-Illinois Steel, Wisconsin Steel, the Pressed Steel Car Company, the aircraft division of the Pullman Company, and the Acme Steel Company, where most of the residents were employed. Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Gwendolyn Brooks lived in Princeton Park with her husband and children during the late -1940s and early 1950s.

The successful completion of the first phase of Princeton Park began a period of unprecedented growth for Holsman. Architect Benard Klekamp joined the firm that year, followed by D. Coder Taylor (1913-2000), and the firm became Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor. The firm grew from thirty employees in 1945 to over sixty by the early 1950s. During this time, the firm also built more than 3,000 dwelling units in Chicago under the Community Development Trust's mutual ownership plan, including the Winchester-Hood Apartments (1946) and the Lunt-Lake Apartments (1948). Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor also served as consulting architects for two prominent high-rise apartment projects designed by Mies van der Rohe—the Promontory Apartments (1946) and 860-880 Lake Shore Drive (1948). Holsman handled not only the integration of engineering and construction for both projects, but also coordinated the structuring of mutual ownership plans for both buildings.

In January 1950, *Architectural Forum* concluded that "as an apartment-building device, mutual ownership is now a major force in the Chicago area." In the issue, John T. Holsman, who had taken over his aging father's position as the firm's principal designer, continued to promote the philanthropic ideals that had guided Henry Holsman's practice:

> The only solution to the urban housing shortage must lie in some form of tenant ownership of apartments…For large numbers of individual families to pool their resources, find and employ competent technical services, acquire a proper site, let sound contracts, and realize an economical and worthwhile housing development is extremely difficult, so difficult that there must be some established pattern available to them—an organization willing and able to guide and safeguard that effort. It is for this purpose that the Community Development Trust was organized.

To further reduce costs and ensure the long-term affordability of their apartment developments, Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor also incorporated several unique methods of construction that were designed to streamline the building process and reduce the use of expensive building materials. In an *Architectural Forum* article devoted to the firm's efforts, the British authors declared Holsman's apartments in Chicago "the most interesting…and the only completely modern thing" they had seen on a recent visit to the United States. "The walls were built differently; the floors were laid differently; the wiring was run differently; the heating was designed differently; the windows were framed differently; the ceiling were [sic] finished differently…in fact, so many things were done differently that it might be shorter to list their points of similarity than their points of difference from the usual garden apartment." The Winchester Hood Apartments and Lunt-Lake Apartments projects allowed the firm to perfect these cost-saving techniques for both walk-up and elevator buildings before they were employed on a much larger scale for Parkway Gardens. Holsman simplified many building elements and utilized pre-fabricated units to save time and minimize expenses. In addition, the firm completely reworked standard construction and installation methods to eliminate the need for materials wherever possible.

On the exterior, rowlock brick walls reinforced with cement eliminated the need for concrete piers and steel lintels and could be constructed in less time and with less expense than typical walls built on a concrete skeletal frame. Adjustable wood templates were designed to hold the pre-cast concrete window surrounds in place while the brickwork was laid. The Holsman flooring system consisted of precast concrete slab panels supported on steel-box, concrete-filled joists that were designed to be left exposed and painted, creating the effect of a beamed ceiling within the units and saving time and money on interior finishing. The flooring system also allowed for considerable cost-savings with the radiant heating system—by running the tubing so that it was in direct conduct with the highly conductive steel joist boxes, Holsman's projects used less than half of the amount of tubing required for typical radiant heating applications.

The thoughtful design of interior spaces provided more opportunities to cut costs. Stairs utilized precast treads and risers and prefabricated steel stringers with shelf angles welded on, so stair construction progressed in line with wall construction. Within the units, partition walls were constructed using two-inch-thick gypsum partition panels that required no plasterwork or finishing other than paint. Prefabricated wardrobe storage units were installed as half walls between rooms, eliminating the need for closet build outs. Utilizing these methods, construction on Holsman projects proceeded at an average pace of one floor completed every nine days—three days for brickwork, five days for flooring and mechanicals, and one day for pouring concrete.

The Winchester-Hood Apartments and the Lunt-Lake Apartments, both located on the far north side of Chicago, are closest in their design and execution to the Parkway Garden Homes. The Winchester-Hood Apartments were constructed in two phases between 1946 and 1950 and feature a mixture of three- and four-story walkup buildings and five-story elevator buildings. The complex consists of eighteen brick buildings of an almost identical design to the building at Parkway Garden Homes, with canted window bays, corner windows and streamlined concrete entrance surrounds. The Winchester-Hood Apartments were immediately successful, and Holsman followed this project with the Lunt-Lake Apartment complex at Lunt Avenue and Sheridan Road. A group of Rogers Park war veterans had formed the Lunt-Lake Apartments Association in 1946 to develop an apartment block, but the group failed to get the project off the ground. In 1948, the Community Development Trust purchased the property—a prime lot that overlooked Loyola Park and the lakefront—and made plans to construct a new co-operative consisting of eighty-eight two- and three-bedroom units housed in two nine-story elevator buildings and one four-story walkup building. Although a smaller development than Winchester-Hood or Parkway Garden Homes, the buildings themselves utilized Holsman's signature construction techniques and designs.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARKWAY GARDEN HOMES

Completed in 1955, the Parkway Garden Homes was the last residential project completed by Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor and the last to utilize the Community Development Trust's mutual ownership model, representing the culmination of Henry K. Holsman's life's work. The impetus for the project had begun almost a decade earlier, when the leaders of Chicago's Dining Car Employees Union, whose members had been hard hit by the housing shortage, approached Holsman and the Community Development Trust to develop a housing project that would provide modern, comfortable accommodations for their families. The union's membership consisted almost entirely of black dining car waiters, and the project that developed was intended for ownership by union members and for members of the larger African American community.

The CDT worked with the union to secure a fifteen-acre site at 63rd Street and South Park Avenue (now Martin Luther King Drive), which was formerly occupied by the White City Amusement Park. Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor's initial plans for the project, as reported in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* on December 22, 1946, called for thirty-five buildings, four- to seven-stories high containing 840 five- and six-room apartments and a community center to house nurseries, meeting halls, a library, gymnasium, workshops, dining room, a recreational lounge, and 100 hotel rooms. The projected cost of the complex was estimated at over $6.4 million, but Holsman anticipated that average monthly rents for each apartment would not exceed $50 for mutual owners and $100 for non-trust renters. By the time FHA financing was in place for the project in December of 1947, the total number of apartments had been cut to 694 units in eleven eight-story elevator buildings and twenty-four three-story walkups.

Although Parkway Garden Homes was not as large as the Princeton Park Homes in terms of the total number of residential units, Parkway was the first and largest African American residential development in the country to utilize a mutual ownership plan. The development was also the only of Holsman's residential projects that incorporated both low-rise and high-rise construction. After CDT secured a $2.288 million FHA-insured mortgage for the first phase of the

project, 290 units, in December of 1947, the project became mired in a sea of bureaucratic delays. By the summer of 1949, over 275 families had paid the $2,500 initial investment under the mutual ownership plan, but only one model apartment had been completed. While Holsman worked with the FHA to iron out construction details, members of the co-operative project held open houses to attract new investors, including a large number of World War II veterans.

By the summer of 1950, the project appeared to finally be moving forward. On June 7, City of Chicago building permits totaling over $3 million were issued for the project. On July 1, the *Chicago Defender* announced that the FHA had given final approval for construction of "the largest mutually-owned apartment project to be owned and operated by Negroes in America." In the article, FHA district director E. J. Kelly called the project "another milestone in the production of housing for minority groups through private initiative [that] demonstrates what can be accomplished when individuals of firm purpose band together to secure badly needed housing."

On September 24, 1950, a cornerstone-laying ceremony was held at the site. Mary McLeod Bethune, nationally-recognized black educator and civil rights advocate, delivered the main address. Other distinguished speakers included Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson, Chicago Mayor Martin H. Kennelly, U.S. Senators Scott W. Lucas and Paul Douglas, and Congressman William L. Dawson. Describing the dedication of Parkway Gardens in the *Chicago Defender* later that year, Bethune wrote "I realized I was witnessing an event of unusual significance—the opening of a new frontier to progress, through economic unity….We have learned to recognize the mutual ownership model of housing as an important forward step—much more important…than the occasional acquisition of princely mansions by individuals."

The Parkway Garden Homes complex was completed in 1955 and was lauded by local housing advocates and civil rights leaders as model of community planning. New resident owners interviewed by the *Chicago Daily Tribune* spoke glowingly of the buildings' well-appointed and spacious apartments, which featured innovative radiant heating systems, steel-framed windows, and modern appliances. Assistant building engineer and resident Claude Lawson spoke of the mutual ownership plan as "a good investment against slum encroachment. With such a cooperative plan, each owner has a financial interest in keeping his place up. It is, and will continue to be, a good place to live."

The final project was an unmitigated success; however, Holsman, Holsman, Klekamp & Taylor did not survive as a firm to see Parkway Garden Homes through to completion. Stringent FHA guidelines coupled with harsh market conditions and contractor difficulties led William Holsman, who handled the firm's financing, to make a series of ill-advised business decisions, including transferring funds between building trusts to keep various projects going. The partnership was forced into bankruptcy in December of 1952 and in 1956 the Holsmans were charged with mail fraud in association with their last failed project, an extension to the Winchester Hood Garden Apartments. The judge, "in view of his fine record," sentenced a ninety-year-old Henry Holsman to one hour in the custody of the marshal, but the indictment remained a dark blotch at the end of a long and illustrious career for the architect, who died in 1963 at the age of 96.

PARKWAY GARDEN HOMES AND THE INFLUENCE OF EUROPEAN HOUSING AFTER WORLD WAR I

Although the Parkway Garden Homes was innovative in its financing and construction techniques, architecturally the project was modeled on European housing complexes developed as a response to severe housing shortage following World War I. During the 1920s and 1930s, a new school of architectural thought emerged in Europe that combined ideas from various modern social and artistic movements, including De Stijl, Constructivism, and the Bauhaus School, and applied them to the problem of cost-effective housing. Proponents carried the conviction that humanity could be improved through good design, and that good design developed from a rational and purely functional approach to architecture, with technical honesty and orderly planning as the driving forces behind a building's appearance. Known in Germany as the New Objectivity (or sometimes as Neues Bauen, or the *New Building*) and more broadly defined as "Functionalism" and "Utopian Modernism," this style of residential architecture was embraced by many European governments for the massive social housing projects that were constructed in the inter-war period.

Germany, which stood on the forefront of avant-guarde architectural and planning movements during the 1920s, encouraged an experimental approach with its publicly-supported housing programs. One of the first of these modernist housing settlements was Italienischer Garten in Celle, Germany, designed by German architect Otto Haesler (1880-1962). The settlement, which featured simply-constructed buildings with irregular, asymmetrical plans, flat roofs, and unadorned but brightly painted surfaces, set the tone for future housing settlements throughout Europe. Several of the best known modern European housing settlements were developed in Frankfurt, Germany by city planner Ernst May in

the mid-1920s. May used simplified, prefabricated forms to speed construction, and set the blocks in his complexes at zig-zagging angles to maximize each unit's access to light and ventilation. The settlements in "New" Frankfurt were hailed for their efficiency and adherence to egalitarian ideals. Between 1925 and 1932, May produced over 15,000 units of affordable new housing in the city. Both Haesler and May utilized a style of site planning developed in Germany during the late-nineteenth century and known as "Zeilenbau"—narrow residential buildings were arranged in rows on a large "superblock" so that all dwellings were located off of major traffic streets with plentiful access to light, sun, and cross ventilation.

Although there were important exceptions to the "architectural rationalism" that came out of Germany—the simplified historicist forms of the *Gemeindebauten* public housing in Vienna, the Amsterdam School's expressionist architecture that produced organic, sculptural buildings from brick, the streamlined English cottage style embraced by Britain's post-war housing programs—all of the housing developments constructed in Europe during the interwar years adhered to the basic utilitarian formula of "simple rectangular shapes, no applied ornamentation, and generous window space."

By the 1930s, nearly six million units of new housing had been constructed in Europe. One in seven European families lived in these modern residential developments. The sheer number of new buildings, all utilizing the modern functionalist aesthetic and reflecting modern planning ideas, transformed the continent's built environment. In her 1934 book, *Modern Housing*, influential American planner Catherine Bauer noted: "There is no new housing in Europe which bears even a superficial resemblance to the general run of urban construction in the nineteenth century. There are few gimcracks, no false fronts, no cast-iron entablatures…. Materials are ordinarily used with a degree of honesty, and ornament is reduced to a degree of simplicity."

The United States also experienced a housing shortage and subsequent residential building boom after World War I; however, the buildings that resulted were largely the product of private development interests, not the federal government, and the focus on construction of single-family homes failed to provide adequate housing for those families at the lowest income levels who could not afford to buy a home. Architects adhered primarily to popular historical revival styles; even more modern examples were typically rendered in the highly ornamented Art Deco style. Large-scale affordable apartment developments such as the philanthropic Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments in Chicago and the union-sponsored Amalgamated Apartments in the Bronx, a cooperative project built in 1927 to house members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, were few and far between.

The onset of the Great Depression decimated the private housing market in the United States and created the first real opportunities for publicly-subsidized modern housing. Although it never reached the scale and sheer numbers attained in Europe, housing constructed under the auspices of several New Deal housing programs during the 1930s showed that the developments in Europe had made an impression among housing advocates in the United States.

Among the most important of these early federally-subsidized housing developments was the Carl Mackley Houses in Philadelphia, the first project to receive funding through the Public Works Administration's (PWA) direct loan program. The Mackley Houses were developed by the American Federation of Hosiery Workers and completed in 1933. Designed by architects Oskar Stonorov and Alfred Kastner, both formerly of Germany and both vocal proponents of European modernism, the project served as a test-case of sorts for incorporating the principals of the modern European housing idea into an American housing development. As historian Gail Radford notes, Stonorov's initial plans, which featured three long, narrow high-rise buildings arranged in Zeilenbau fashion, were intended to be "an aggressively avant-garde statement." A model of the project was included in the famous exhibition on modern architecture organized by Philip Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock for the Museum of Modern Art in 1932. By the time construction began in December of 1933, Kastner had broken up Stonorov's modernist high rises into four three-story buildings; however, the final plans retained the superblock site plan with minimal alteration. The buildings themselves, simple rectangular structures with large groupings of windows and unadorned wall surfaces of yellow and orange glazed industrial tile, conformed closely to the functional model pioneered by the Germans in the 1920s.

In Chicago, the first modern housing developments designed on the European model were constructed under the auspices of the Chicago Housing Authority during the late 1930s. Funded in part by the PWA, the Julia C. Lathrop Homes, Jane Addams Houses, Trumball Park Homes, and Ida B. Well Homes provided clean, well-lighted, well-ventilated modern apartments for approximately 3,000 low-income families. The complexes consisted of groupings of simple brick walk-up apartment buildings and row houses arranged around landscaped courtyards and playgrounds. The WPA

commissioned local artists, including Edgar Miller, Alfred Lenzi, Charles Umlauf, and Juliana Morgan to design fanciful sculptures to decorate the playgrounds within these complexes.

Holsman, Holsman, Klelamp & Taylor's design for the Parkway Garden Homes reflected the influence of the European housing model as it was interpreted in PWA projects such as the Carl Mackley Houses and the Chicago Housing Authority's early developments. Like his European and American predecessors, Holsman's approach to the design of his largest housing project was driven by the need to streamline costs and reduce the buildings to their essential functional elements. The angled bays on the primary elevations of all the buildings, which Holsman also utilized at the Winchester Hood Apartments, enlivened the facades without utilizing applied ornamentation and recalled the "zig zag houses" in Frankfurt. The careful arrangement of buildings on the fifteen-acre site served to maximize light and ventilation throughout the units, and oriented the tenants away from the streets along the perimeter of the site and towards the protected interior. Parkway Garden Homes combined lower density walk-up buildings like those constructed by the CHA in the 1930s with larger eight-story elevator buildings. By incorporating a larger number of walk-up buildings and keeping the elevator buildings at a relatively modest height (at a time when new public housing developments in the city were reaching sixteen to nineteen stories) helped keep the complex at a more human scale.

The Parkway Garden Homes remained a stable community with an active resident council and continued to attract black families of modest means through the last half of the twentieth century. Notable residents of the complex include First Lady Michelle Robinson Obama, who lived in an apartment at Parkway Garden Homes with her family during the mid-1960s. The complex remains a tangible reminder of the transformation that occurred in the Black Belt during the post-war period and stands as the first large-scale residential development in the city to be cooperatively owned and operated by African Americans.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Parkway Garden Homes
Name of Property

Cook County, IL
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Appx. 15 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	Zone	Easting	Northing	3	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	Zone	Easting	Northing	4	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the property encompasses the entire parcel of land associated with the Parkway Garden Homes complex, bounded on the north by East 63rd Street, on the east by South Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, on the south by East 66th Street, and on the west by a large railroad yard owned by the Chicago Transit Authority.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary corresponds to the parcel of land that was historically associated with the Parkway Garden Homes in Chicago, Illinois.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Emily Ramsey
organization MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC date February 152011
street & number 53 West Jackson Blvd, Suite 1357 telephone 312-786-1700 ext. 7013
city or town Chicago state IL zip code 60604
e-mail eramsey@mac-ha.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Parkway Garden Homes

City or Vicinity: Chicago

County: Cook **State:** Illinois

Photographer: Allen Johnson/Emily Ramsey
MacRostie Historic Advisors
53 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 1357
Chicago, IL 60604

Date Photographed: August 2010, March 2011

Digital images on file at MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Building numbers used below correspond to the numbers assigned on the attached keyed site plan.

1. View north from main entrance at Martin Luther King Drive
2. Looking north along Calumet Avenue
3. Looking southwest at Buildings #13 (6452-56 South Martin Luther King Drive), 15 (6444 South Martin Luther King Drive), and 19 (6430-6434 South Martin Luther King Drive)
4. Buildings #2 (6538-6540 South Martin Luther King Drive) and #3 (6536 South Martin Luther King Drive), looking north
5. Buildings #3, #4 (6530-6534 South Martin Luther King Drive), and #8 (6514 South Martin Luther King Drive), looking northwest
6. Building #31 (6356 South Martin Luther King Drive), looking northwest, with Building #33 at right
7. Building #23 (6414 South Martin Luther King Drive), looking west, Buildings #21,#22 (6416-6420 South Martin Luther King Drive), #25, and #26 in foreground
8. Building #23, left, Buildings #24 and 25 at right, looking west
9. Building # (6444 South Martin Luther King Drive), Building #13 at left, looking north
10. Building #25 at left, Building #28, center, #24 in background, looking west
11. Building #3, looking northwest
12. Same, looking east

Parkway Garden Homes — Cook County, IL
Name of Property — County and State

13. Building #22 (6416-6420 South Martin Luther King Drive), looking southwest
14. Same, rear, looking north
15. Buildings #10 (6508-6512 South Martin Luther King Drive), left, and #7 (6516-6520 South Martin Luther King Drive), right, looking east
16. Building #5 (6528 South Martin Luther King Drive), typical low-rise building entrance detail
17. Building #26,typical low-rise building entrance detail
18. Typical concrete pane detail above low-rise building entrance
19. Building #29 (6362 South Martin Luther King Drive), rear stair detail
20. Typical rear stair on low-rise buildings
21. Typical mid-rise entrance
22. Building #16, mid-rise canopy detail

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Parkway Gardens Preservation LP (Contact: Matthew Finkle)

street & number 60 Columbus Circle telephone 212-801-2011

city or town New York state NY zip code 10023

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Parkway Garden Homes
Name of Property
Cook County, IL
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps & Images Page 19

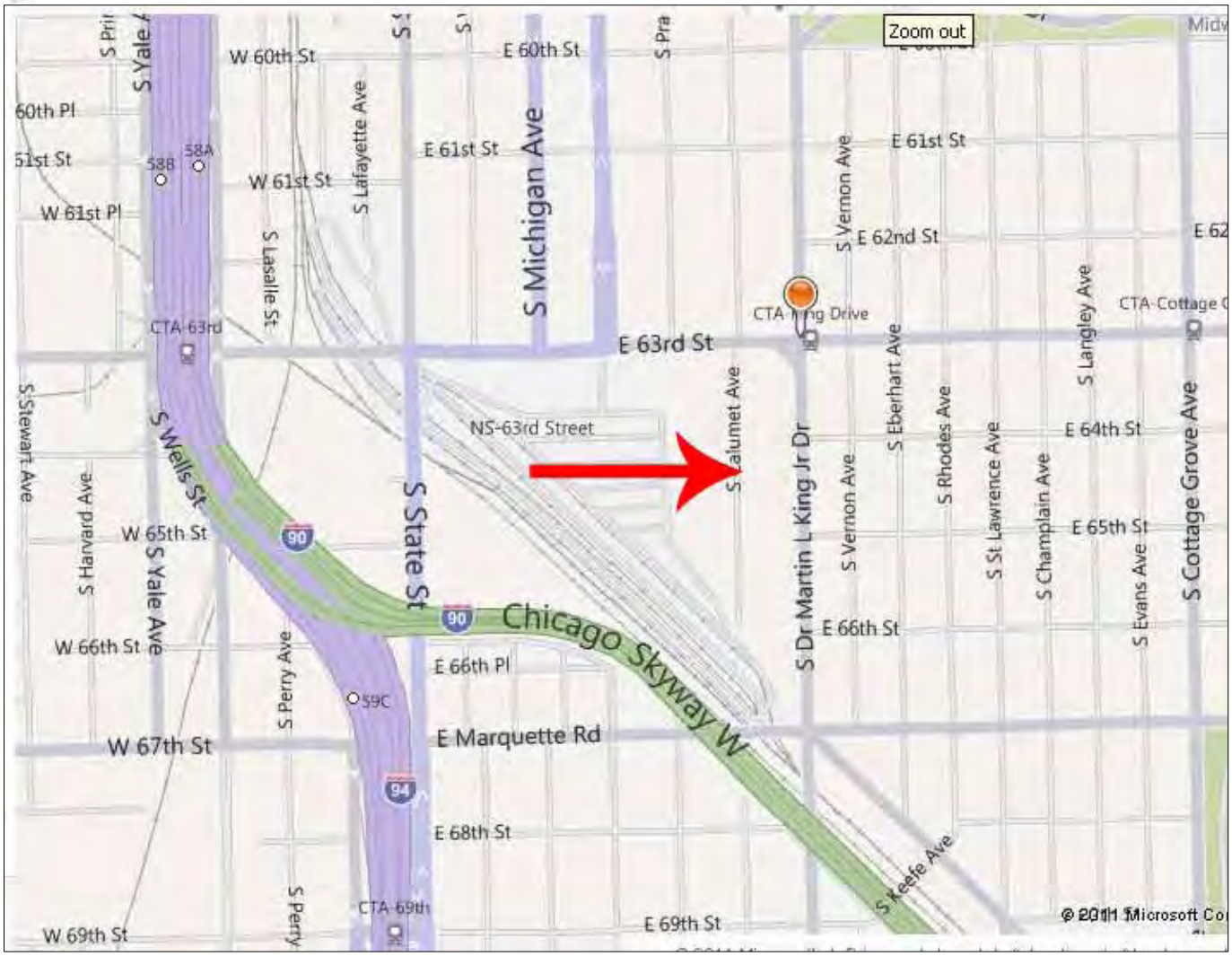


Figure 1: Location Map

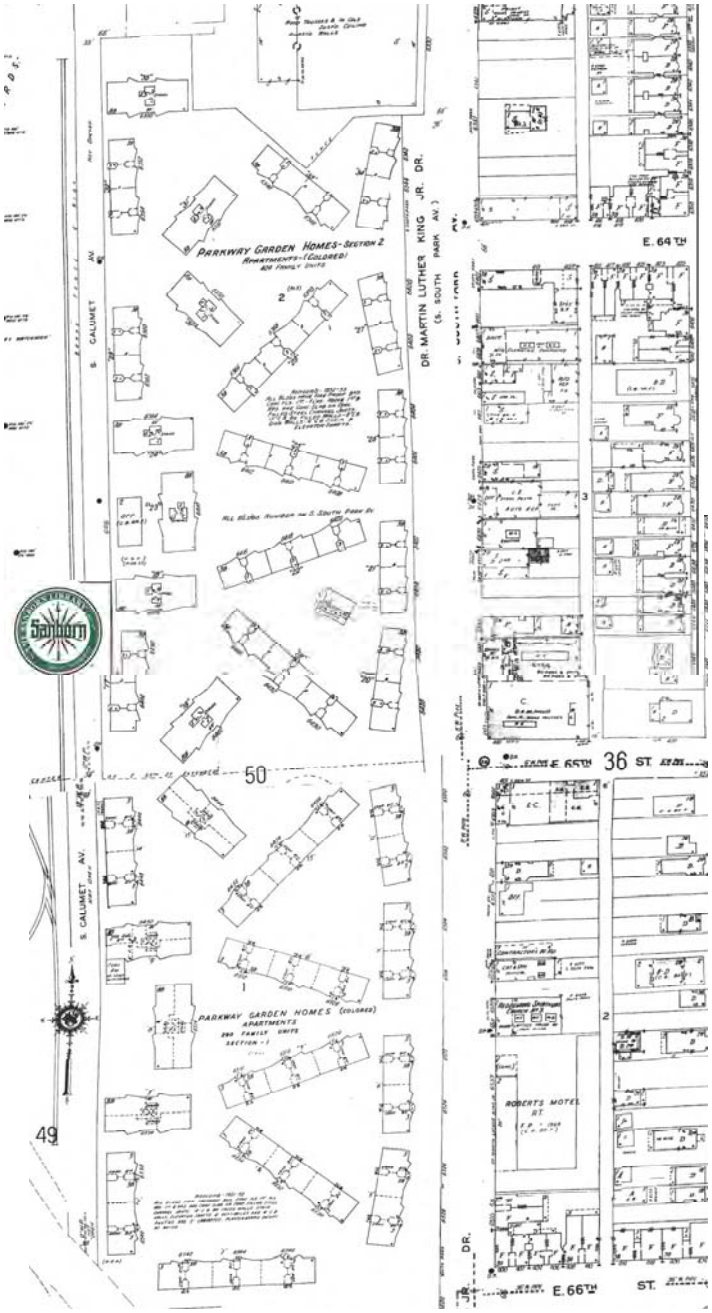


Figure 2: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1975.

Figure 3: Brochure for Parkway Garden Homes published by the Community Development Trust in 1950.

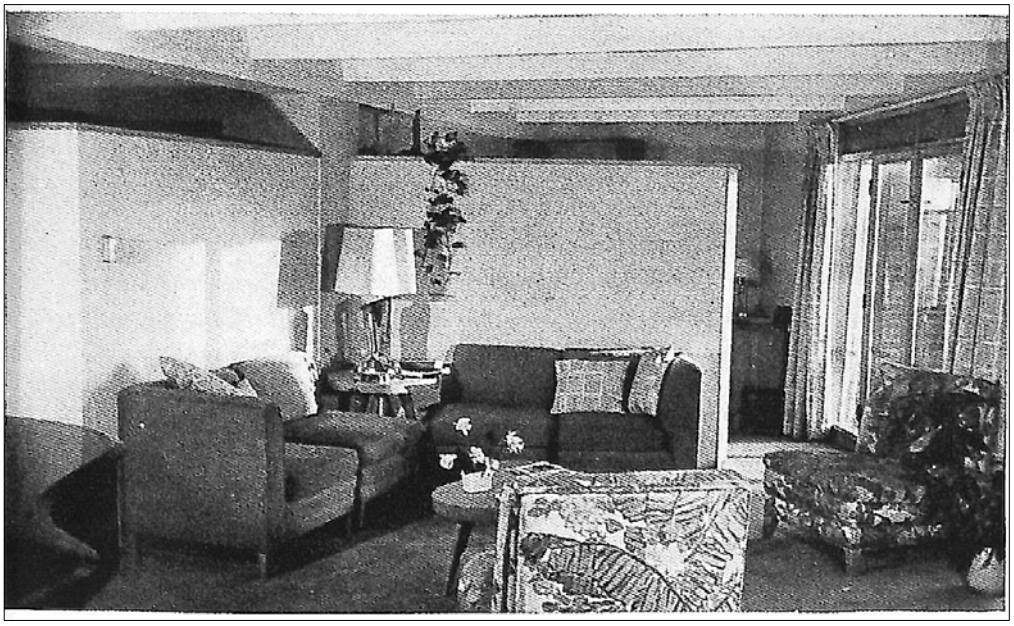


Figure 4: Typical interior of a Holsman unit from Winchester Hood Apartments, which was built utilizing the same floor plans as Parkway Garden Homes.
Architectural Forum. Januarv 1950

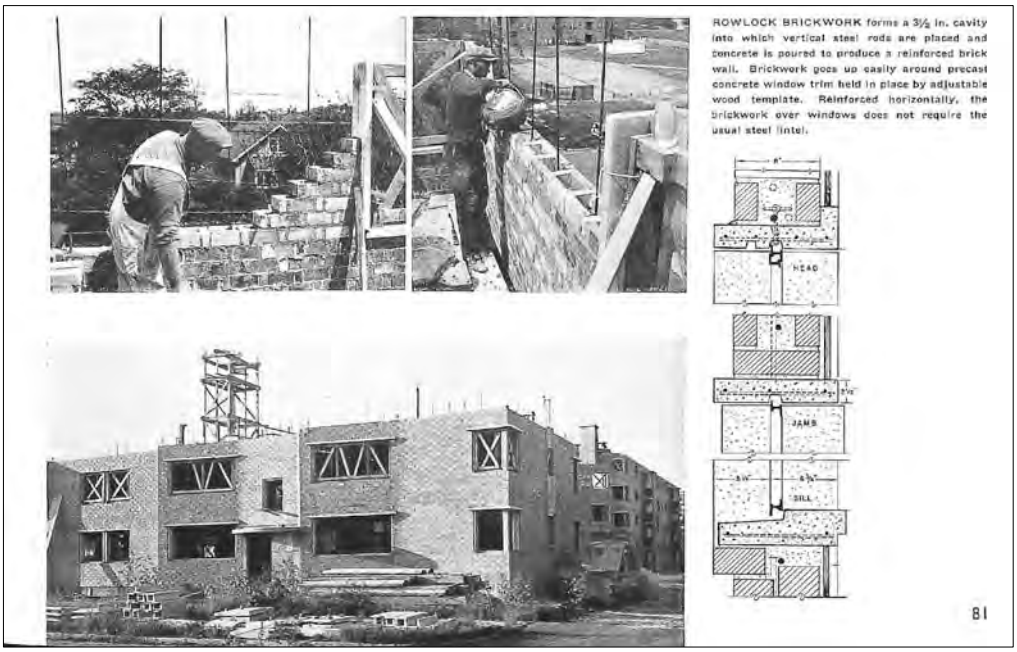
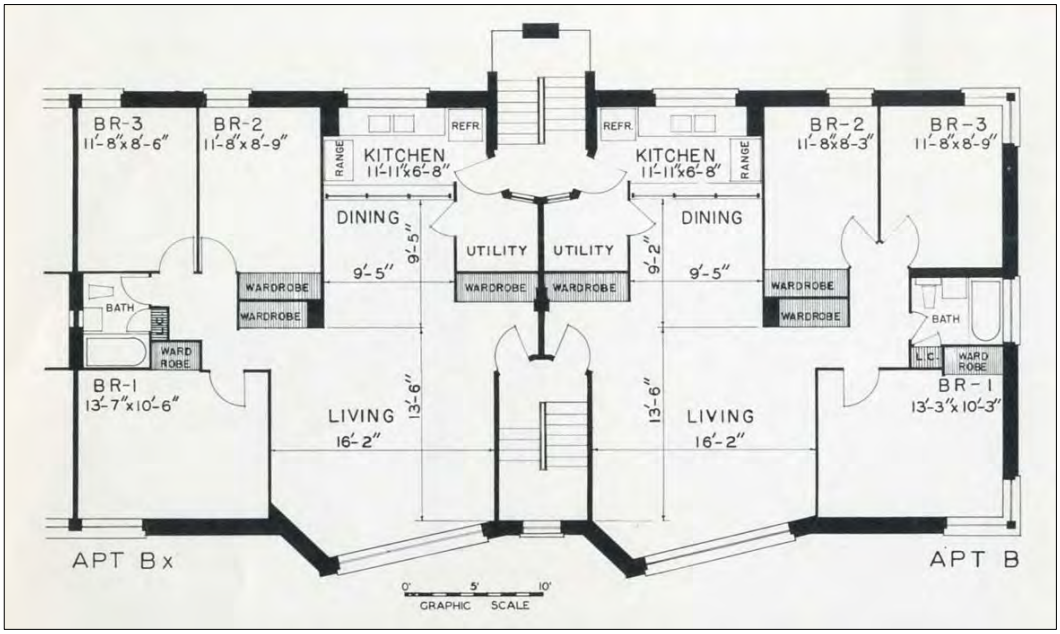
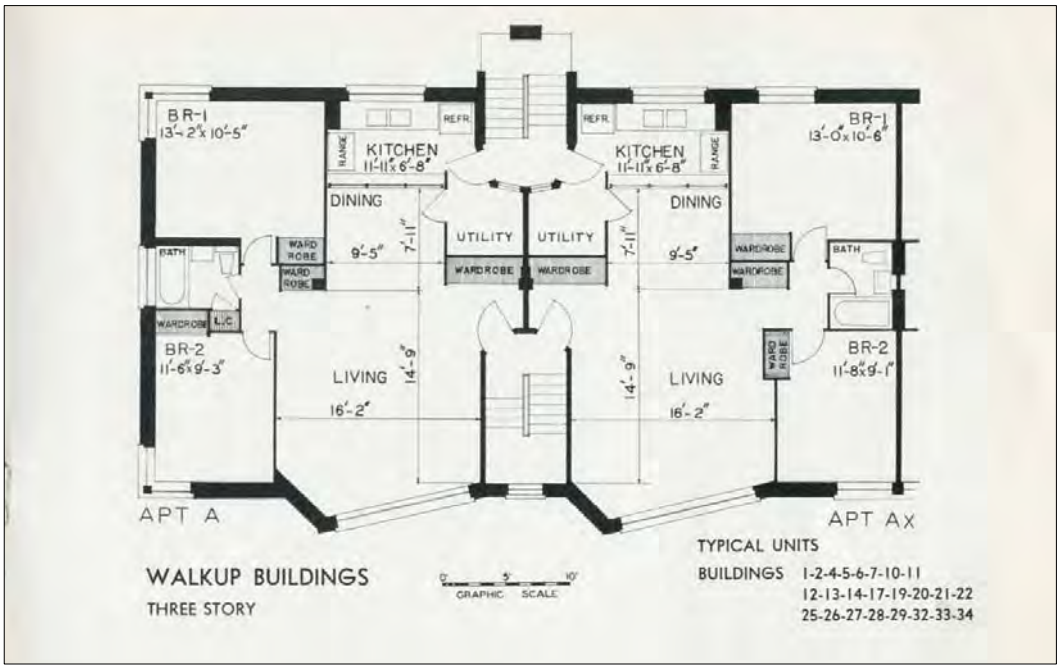


Figure 5: Winchester Hood Apartments under construction, showing reinforced brick wall construction used in Parkway Garden Homes.
Architectural Forum. Januarv 1950





Figures 6 and 7: Floor plans of three-story walkup buildings at Parkway Garden Homes.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Parkway Garden Homes
Name of Property
Cook County, IL
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Maps & Images Page 24

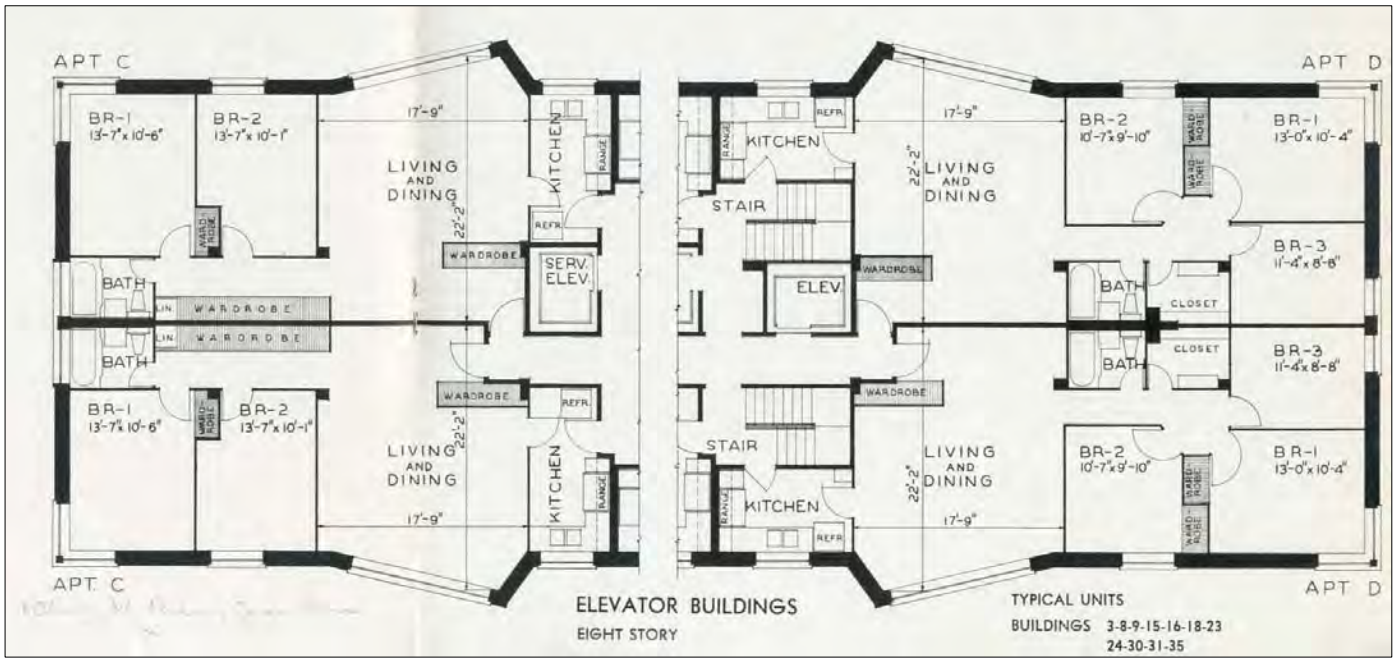
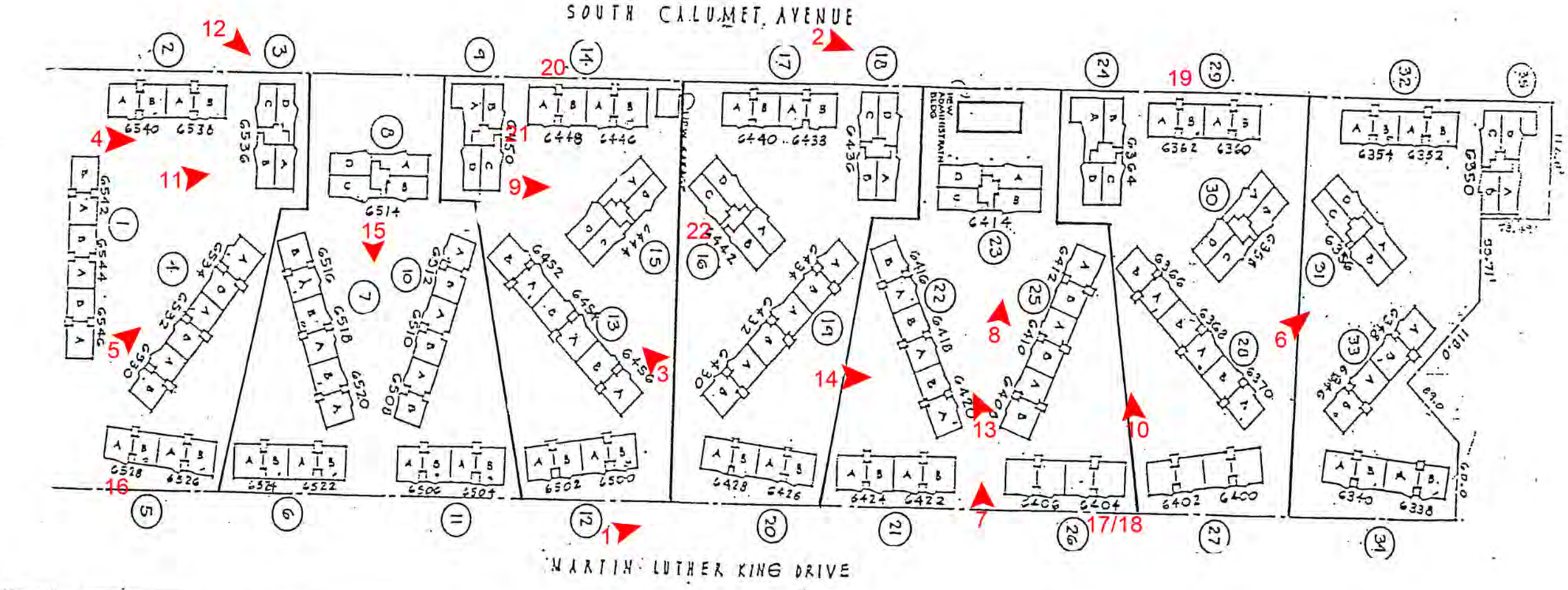


Figure 8: Floor plan of elevator buildings at Parkway Garden Homes.



National Register Nomination Photo Key
Parkway Garden Homes
Chicago, Cook County, IL


6540


6536


6404